



Jim McMahon OBE MP
Minister of State (Minister for Local
Government and English Devolution)

Via email:
LGReorganisation@communities.gov.uk

24 March 2025

Dear Minister,

We write to you as the Leaders of West Berkshire, South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse district councils in support of the two unitary authority option for Oxfordshire, which was submitted to you on Friday, and includes a proposal for our three councils to unite as a new 'Ridgeway Council'. We do so enthusiastically; firm in our belief that this option would have huge benefits for our residents, and for our communities.

Our initial work together, which has culminated in the attached detailed interim proposal, has already shown that this option has undeniable merit. We realise that this interim work will now have to be developed into a more detailed proposal, and we can assure you that we are working collaboratively and positively together towards making Ridgeway Council a reality.

The other part of the two-unitary council option is made up of the existing district areas of West Oxfordshire, Oxford City and Cherwell. That "North Oxfordshire Council" unitary would complement Ridgeway Council in providing robust support to the Mayoral Strategic Authority and is being brought forward by the district councils of West Oxfordshire and Cherwell, meaning the majority of Oxfordshire's councils are working towards this two-unitary council option.

Oxfordshire County Council has included other options in its submission, including an interim proposal for a single county-wide unitary - the county council is the only Oxfordshire authority supporting this model. We firmly believe that our preferred option is deliverable and better meets the objectives laid out in the Devolution White Paper, and will deliver meaningful local benefits, not just to our areas but to our neighbouring areas as well.

We look forward to hearing initial feedback from you or from your officials and are excited to bring forward the full potential of Local Government Reorganisation for our communities.

Yours sincerely



Jeff Brooks
Leader
West Berkshire Council



David Rouane
Leader
South Oxfordshire District
Council



Bethia Thomas
Leader
Vale of White Horse
District Council